

Appl. No.: 09/912,814

• Amendment Dated: 1/23/06

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**IN THE DRAWINGS**

Please note the amendment to Fig. 1. In particular, the legend "Prior Art" has been added. A Replacement Sheet has been provided reflecting this change.

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**REMARKS**

This amendment is responsive to the Action dated August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005. With this response, Fig. 1, the Abstract and certain of the claims have been amended, as above. Support for the amendments and new claims can be found in the original specification, claims and/or drawings. In this regard, no new matter has been introduced. Accordingly, with this response claims 1-31, as selectively amended, remain pending.

**§102(b) Rejection of Claims 1-3, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30 and 31**

In paragraph 3 of the Action, claims 1-3, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30 and 31 were rejected as being anticipated by a patent issued to Ward (USP 5,701,294) pursuant to 35 USC §102(b). In response, Applicant has overcome the rejection of such claims.

Without accepting/adopting the characterization of the claims and/or the cited reference, Applicant has taken this opportunity to amend certain of the claims, as above, for purposes of clarification. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited reference fails to anticipate or suggest at least the features added through amendment in, e.g., rejected claims 1, 30 or 31 and, as such, respectfully requests that the §102(b) rejection of such claims be withdrawn.

Applicant notes that claims 2, 3, 23, 24, 26 and 27 depend from patentable base claim 1, as amended. In addition to any independent bases for patentability, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 3, 23, 24, 26 and 27 are likewise patentable over the Ward reference by virtue of at least such dependency on patentable base claim 1. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the §102(b) rejection of such claims be withdrawn.

**§103(a) Rejection of Claims 4 and 7**

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In **paragraph 4** of the Action, claims 4 and 7 were rejected as being unpatentable over the Ward reference in view of a patent issued to Freeburg (USP 5,134,615) pursuant to 35 USC §103(a). In response, Applicant has overcome the rejection of such claims.

Without accepting/adopting the characterization of the claims and/or the cited references, Applicant has taken this opportunity to amend certain of the claims, as above, for purposes of clarification. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to disclose or suggest at least the combination of features added through amendment in, e.g., rejected claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of references.

Applicant notes that claims 4 and 7 depend from patentable base claim 1, as amended. In addition to any independent bases for patentability, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 7 are likewise patentable over the cited references by virtue of at least such dependency on patentable base claim 1. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the §103(a) rejection of such claims be withdrawn.

#### **§103(a) Rejection of Claims 5, 6, 8 and 9**

In **paragraph 5** of the Action, claims 5, 6, 8 and 9 were rejected as being unpatentable over the Ward reference in view of a patent application in the name of Chen (Publ. No. 2005/0059401) pursuant to 35 USC §103(a). In response, Applicant has overcome the rejection of such claims.

Without accepting/adopting the characterization of the claims and/or the cited references, Applicant has taken this opportunity to amend certain of the claims, as above, for purposes of clarification. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to disclose or suggest

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at least the combination of features added through amendment in, e.g., rejected claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of references.

Applicant notes that claims 5, 6, 8 and 9 depend from patentable base claim 1, as amended. In addition to any independent bases for patentability, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 7 are likewise patentable over the cited references by virtue of at least such dependency on patentable base claim 1. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the §103(a) rejection of such claims be withdrawn.

#### **§103(a) Rejection of Claims 10-22**

In paragraph 6 of the Action, claims 10-22 were rejected as being unpatentable over the Ward reference in view of a patent issued to Gitlin (USP 6,064,662) pursuant to 35 USC §103(a). In response, Applicant has overcome the rejection of such claims.

Without accepting/adopting the characterization of the claims and/or the cited references, Applicant has taken this opportunity to amend certain of the claims, as above, for purposes of clarification. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to disclose or suggest at least the combination of features added through amendment in, e.g., rejected claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of references.

Applicant notes that claims 10-22 depend from patentable base claim 1, as amended. In addition to any independent bases for patentability, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10-22 are likewise patentable over the cited references by virtue of at least such dependency on

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patentable base claim 1. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the §103(a) rejection of such claims be withdrawn.

**CONCLUSION**

In light of at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-31, as selectively amended, are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. *The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.*

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 50-0221.

Respectfully submitted,  
LUC HAUMONTE

Date: January 23, 2006

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